THE BI-MONTHLY

Newsletter of the Bisexual Center

Volume 4, Number 1 January/February 1980

Membership Meeting

The Bi-Center is an All Volunteer organization. We have no special funding, no grants, no foundation awards. It takes a lot of energy to create the kind of community we have been enjoying for the past three and a half years. We need a constant source of new energy to keep us growing, vital and alive.

If the Bi-Center has been important in your life and contributed to you in some way, now is the time to return some of that good karma. We are having a general membership meeting to discuss new directions for the Bi-Center and the way in which you can help make them happen. We also desperately need help to continue the on-going high quality of the newsletter and other functions at the center. If you care about the Center please make this important meeting on Sunday, January 27th at 7:30 pm.

In solidarity,

David Lourea for the
Board of Directors

THE BISEXUAL CENTER

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this issue

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membership

$6 -	Full-time Student, Unemployed, Retired
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$13-100	Contributing
$101-1000	Sustaining

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How did you hear about the Bi Center?_____

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PERSON to PERSON

by Michael Gray

When I heard about the Bi-Center I envisioned a warm, friendly, open meeting place for people of unrestricted sexual preference. I dreamed about the serenity of sharing a genderless life style in the clean sanity of androgyny, reveling in the chaos of freedom of expression, fearless of reproach.

Sigh

Nice huh? I wish it were that easy. I wish I could be that way. You know, free. Making my own decisions, taking the responsibility for my life style, then doing "something" to promote it. How to promote it though.

I wondered about that for a long time, tried a lot of different things while I wondered, and got emotionally shit on (crapped on for the genteel among us) trying these things while I wondered what to do.

How many of you, who identify as bi-sexual, have put an ad in an adult personal column and got the results you hoped for? Was it a good experience? It can't be discounted because maybe some people might get "something" out of it. But for me it felt furtive, like a thing done out of desparation for lack of a more direct avenue. How many "bi-sexuals" did you meet? I also felt less accepted than ever. If it's natural why do I need to put a want ad in the paper?

Crap. (Shit if you don't mind.) Or. How about those "membership sex clubs"? Have you ever put out $15 or $25 dollars to meet other "sexually liberated" people through their news letter? You could have been delighted or disappointed. I got bored with all the letter writing and long distance calls that never made friends. There were a lot of would be lovers though.

Sheesh.

I won't cuss this time, promise, but how many times are how many bars cruised by bi-sexual people pretending to be "one of the crowd"? (Take your pick, either extreme would work.)

What do you want? Steam baths in the gay community? Singles bars? Porno flicks? How about an exotic sensual nudist camp where the "girls go to meet the girls" and the guys love it?

OK. Maybe I'm being a bit melodramatic. Bi's aren't the only people who get used. Ask any civil rights group and they will tell you all about their woes and blows over the years. Ask any individual and they might, under the right circumstances, tell you their own sad story. Most of us have them. But where do you go to meet other bi's safely, without the hassle of the hustle?

No where. Wherever you go people will approach you for some kind of interaction. It really is up to you as to how you relate to that and what you consider hassle or hustle. Right? The Bi-Center is like the U. S. O., the Y. M./W. C. A. or any other low key social/support facility. While there you gotta behave. Once you leave there you can form your own relationship with the people or person you met there. Which goes without saying, (although I am going to say it) if you don't go you don't meet anyone.

Alright. Now for the sermon. The Bi-Center is an organization seeking non-profit status as an alternative life styles support source. In this case it is designed to offer support mainly for the "Bi-sexual community", or as I prefer, persons of non-restricted sex preference. (You can use your own definition of bi-sexual. Better still, tell us what your definition is.)

Seeking non-profit status also means we are a volunteer organization. None of our office people are paid,

nor the Board Members or anyone else who helps out at the Center. There is a lot of time necessary to "run" the Center, done for the most part by perhaps ten percent of the membership. We have been loosing a lot of volunteers because they've gotten "burned out" by the amount of time they needed to put into the Center's continuing existence.

Now instead of wondering what to do I wonder why they do it and how much I can do. Yet I wonder still about the low turn out, our static membership (which dropped from 346 to 328 in November) and I wonder where the major part of you are?

Reading newspaper ads? Writing or waiting for a letter? Skulking the bars and clubs?

I promised to write an article six months ago and now (if it's not vulgar and sarcastic) I have done just that. The Center needs a stronger. more supportive membership in order to form the sense of community we need in support of ourselves. We need numbers, ideas, fund raisers (people and ideas) and we need you, our existing members to stand behind the Center.

When I brought up the idea of asking for written response from the membership-at-large I was told, politely, that response was unlikely.

Is it? What does the Center mean to you? I'd like to hear from you even if it's just a few lines. We'd like to print some of your ideas so tell me how to credit it. Also from next issue on I will research and discuss each of the Center's existing functions, their structure, purpose and whatever else seems appropriate to pass on. Perhaps you might indicate your interest in a particular function or (it would be nice) write about one you've been to.

Thank-you and if your arm is not in a sling, write. If it is, call us.

Love ya all

Michael Gray

This has been a personal statement and in no way reflects the views or opinions of the Bi-Center or it's Board Members.

Come Join Us!

We're getting together to go see the Rocky Horror Picture Show on Saturday night, February 23rd. Come at 10 pm to the Bi-Center to socialize, (some people will probably do some makeup and costumes, too). We'll leave for the Strand Theater on Market St. by 11 pm, in plenty of time to make the midnight show.

Two of our members are in the cast of "Celluloid Jam" formerly "Double Feature", the theater production of the movie's plot that's performed at the foot of the screen. To say nothing of the rice and toast that's being thrown in the audience! Should be fun.

Meeting Men, Making Friends

Many people think San Francisco is the easiest place for men to meet other men...not necessarily so... if it can't happen here it can't happen. Yet many of us can't deal with the meat market feeling of the bars or baths and don't want a steady stream of one-night stands.

Meeting Men - Making Friends is a one-day workshop designed to explore new ways for men to meet other men and develop caring friendships. Through the use of media, roleplaying and small- and large-group sharing we will take a look at improving our own self images, trusting ourselves and other men, recognizing non-verbal communication and hopefully have some fun in the process.

TIME: Saturday, February 23 from 9:30 am to 6:00 pm

PLACE: Bi-Center, 1757 Hayes in S.F.

FACILATATORS: David Lourea and Steven Brown

COST: $20.00 for Bi-Center members
$25.00 for non-members

Preregistration is essential: to preregister send a check for $5.00 to David Lourea at the Bi-Center.

WHAT HAPPENS SEXUALLY WHEN ONE CHANGES FROM MALE TO FEMALE?

Our experiences
by Lucy and Anne

We have been living together for 1.5 yrs, during which time Anne has been continuing hormone therapy as she transits from male to female. Lucy is a genetic female with some cross gender traits-a very assertive personality and nontraditional attitudes about openness and sex roles in a loving relationship.

When we first met, Anne was reluctant to have anything below her waist touched and was in a sexual holding pattern until she could have her surgery. As we got to know each other better, Lucy's exploration and discovery of her bisexuality served as an inspiration for Anne to discover her sexuality presurgically.

We look a course in human sexuality at the Institute for the Advanced Study of Human Sexuality. It made us feel a lot better to know that other people liked what we liked. Anne had felt that she was the only person who had interest in the good feelings she got from anal stimulation, cross dressing and being the more passive partner in sex. Lucy felt guilty about being too assertive for a genetic female. Well, we decided to just try exactly what feels natural and see if we were struck by lightning for our sins. So far we are intact and going strong.

Anne experienced a shift from the male-like genital focused orgasm to a total body non-erectal non-ejaculatory form of orgasm by stimulation of many parts of her body not considered before-which will be utilized in the surgery to form the appropriate organs. Use of a vibrator has been fantastic for changing stimulus patterns from the 'up and down' feeling to one of direct stimulation of the glans, which will be reconstructed to form the clitoris. We found relaxation to be the key to getting out of the mind tapes which keep us from enjoying our bodies. For us a hot tub and sauna followed by massage has preceded some of our best sexual experiences.

We are very interested in bringing men and women into our lovemaking because we like both sexes. Anne especially wants to experience men sexually presurgically. A threesome has proven great especially when we can both have the feeling of a man and a woman making love to us. It seems to be the ultimate satisfaction for our bi-ness.

There are a lot of 'experts' who say that a male to female gender switch should be accompanied by a heterosexual orientation. We feel that the Kinsey and Benjamin scales are two different things and that if anything, a person with cross gender feelings might be more likely to like both sexes, especially if their previous experience was with a heterosexual relation. This is our personal feeling only, although we do know people who are in a similar situation and feel as we do.

We continue to evolve and explore possibilities that we haven't attempted before. We have not attempted here to discuss the etiological, societal and the emotional aspects of our love for each other. We do get a lot of flak, especially from people who feel that we are not 'normal' and should stay hidden and feel guilty. We feel great about ourselves and would like to help others feel as good as we do.

We will be at the gender/sexuality workshop at the bicenter Feb. 10, 1980, and hope to explore these questions and try to formulate some answers at that time.

Love, Lucy and Anne

Extra, extra! Bi Center former editor, Jim Barnes, moves on to other things...(our thanks, Jim.)

BISEXUAL BLUES

by DAVID LEWIS

Many gays tell me I'm actually 100% homosexual. They'd have me believe that I just say I'm bisexual to avoid experiencing the guilt and rejection which would plague me were I to fully accept my homosexuality.

"Hets" (short for "heterosexuals") are either fascinated by me, or fearful of me. Many women think it "kinky" that I get it on with guys too. Straights have also confronted me with the thought-provoking analysis that I'm either 100% gay and play-acting with women to alleviate guilt, or I'm just going through an extended teenaged phase of "experimenting."

"So, all right," they'd concede. My experimentation is going on quite a bit longer than that of most guys. Some console me with the knowledge that I'll "grow out of it!" So far, at age 28, with 14 years "on the fence," I grow more and more into it, rather than out of it!

When I encounter people who are sincerely interested in exploring my mind a bit deeper, I invariably run into variations of the same questions:

"But surely you have a preference?"

Yes, I answer. I prefer both.

"But what about marriage? Settling down? Having children?"

Being bisexual makes the concept of marriage a little difficult to envision. I definitely want a primary interpersonal relationship. But were I to settle with a woman, I know I'd feel the urge to play with men from time to time. It would be a unique woman who would non-jealously celebrate, as I would, my Tuesday and Thursday nights out "with the boys." I've never met her.

The same could be said for setting up house with a man: he'd resent my occasional roaming toward delightful rendezvous with women. Somewhere the conditioning of "fidelity" still has an equal grasp on both gays and hets who consider relationships. Breaking that tenet is grounds for serious marital problems, if not separation--and the difficulty compounds if you break the monogamous ideal with a person of the other sex!

Children? I delight in them! That's why I had a vasectomy many years ago. I believed then, and still do, that there are already too many young-'uns on earth (and more coming every day) who need people to care for them. If I decided to raise children, I'd adopt. Most women, however, would like to have "their own" to satisfy the primal mothering instincts. And living with a man would make it difficult, if nigh impossible, to adopt. Prevailing attitudes would label us "perverts," unfit to raise a decent child without thwarting his (or her) sexuality. Two men couldn't possibly raise anything but a drag queen (unless in movies like La Cage Aux Folles) --could they, now?

"You seem so superficial in your remarks about relationships. Don't you see there's more than libido involved? You've put 'relationship' on a purely sexual level. What about support, intimacy, sharing, love?"

Sexuality is the key to it, though! In any relationship I've had with a woman or with a man, the core of most difficulties between my partners and me has always been sexuality. In relationships I've discovered deep emotional spaces, and experienced wonderful, satisfying, fulfilling and joyous sexual relations with my partner. I can be, and have been, "faithful" to one partner for up to 3-1/2 years. But then I get the tingle. The urge. The desire... for an encounter with a person of the opposite sex. To me, exploring and satisfying these urges doesn't in any way diminish the affection, closeness or support I have and feel for my primary partner. All I want is

a romp with another person who happens to be of the other sex, and that usually opens up a can of worms with my primary partner.

"Maybe it would be best if you didn't tell your primary partner, and went out and 'romped' discreetly, on the q.t.?"

That would be a violation of the trust, intimacy and respect I would have and would want to maintain with my primary partner! I tend to be too open and honest. In fact, I demand openness and honesty in relationships. I would need to share my experiences with a partner and feel that person's support and joy. So far in my life such sharing has only been met with envy, jealousy, bitterness, fear, and, ultimately, separation.

"Then why don't you establish a relationship with another bisexual? Wouldn't that eliminate a lot of your troubles?"

Excellent idea! Do you know one? I mean, I've never truly run into another bisexual person who was interested in establishing a primary relationship. Usually I've met other bi's on their Tuesday and Thursday "nights out!"

Having, or being open to, the "best of both worlds," in actuality can leave one with the best of neither world.

Woody Allen was once quoted as saying something like "being bisexual increases by 100% your chances of a date on Saturday night." It also increases by 100% your chances of growing old alone.

I've tried to deny my bisexuality a number of times in order to get the comfort and support of one person in a relationship.

I've passed for straight, and I've passed for gay. I've "come out" as a homosexual--a necessary step one must go through before one can discover one's bisexuality. I became active in gay lib, gay organizations, gay relationships, gay encounter groups, gay everything--to the exclusion of contact with heterosexuals. I've subscribed to gay newspapers and magazines, visited gay bars, gay steam baths, gay rap groups, and marched in gay parades. I've felt gay pride many, many times, and I've loved many men.

Yet a huge void inside me throbbed: "something's missing." The first time I slept with a woman after a 3-1/2 year hiatus, during which I was into exclusively gay behavior, I felt the void was filled.

So I swung back into the heterosexual world. I became active in feminism, ERA ratification groups, "straight"-oriented encounter groups, straight relationships. I subscribed to Playboy and Hustler, visited singles bars, singles rap groups, and I loved many women--to the exclusion of any contact with homosexuals.

A huge void again throbbed inside me: "something's missing." The first time I slept with a man after a 1-1/2 year hiatus, while being into exclusively straight behavior, I felt the void was filled.

The identity crisis in acknowledging and embracing my bisexuality was much more grueling than either "coming out" or "going back." I found that I didn't belong!

At least by saying I was gay, I could gain a certain acceptance, comraderie and comfort in the established and identifiable gay stream. The same was true by saying I was straight, in the straight world. But to be in the middle of both, I became an outcast.

Having a relationship became an elusive ideal. I felt trapped into the satyric life of a "swinger." So I learned to become self-sufficient, self-satisfied, and content with resignation to a single life of male and female "OIF's" ("Occasionally Intimate Friends"). I've become my own best friend --and I didn't have to read that pop-psych Berkowitz book to do that!

I did, however, have to read the Kinseys, the Masters and Johnsons, the Anita Bryants, the Abigail Van Burens, the Hugh Hefners, the Penthouse Forums, the George Weinbergs, ad infinitum, searching for a crumb with which to identify and hold on to, something to comfort me and support me in my identity. Rarely did I find even a tidbit of "expert" opinion for my dilemma. Everything was usually black or white, gay or straight. The gray area was cloudy, and I had to form my own identity and develop my own rationales of comfort.

"Experts" have guesstimated that 10% of the population of the United States (23 million people) are homosexual. I'd guess that 10% of that number are actively bisexual.

No doubt many of those numbers have reached the point that I have, recently: abandonment of the urge to mate in a primary relationship. Instead, I call up an "OIF" on Saturday night, have him or her come over, and, prior to passion, watch a Woody Allen movie on television.

BARNES

Groups and Workshops

GENDER/SEXUALITY WORKSHOP

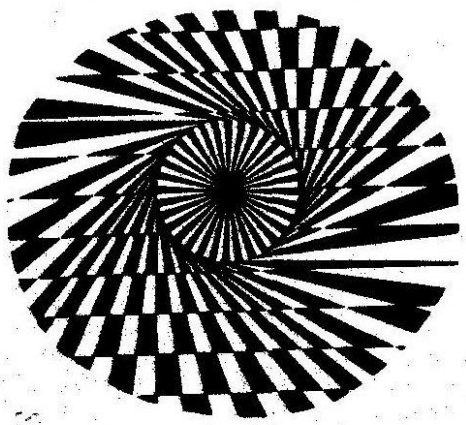
We will explore the interrelationships of gender feelings and sexual preferences. We will look at the male and female sides of our personality and how we feel about those aspects of ourselves that differ from the stereotype. We will do some processes to determine the m/f aspects of ourselves and will explore about how we feel about them. We will discuss sexuality and whether we choose to play out the gender role assigned to us by society or whether we can shift to attitudes supposedly held by the opposite gender, if those feel good to us. We will deal with the issue of the TV/TS in transition and how sexuality evolves as gender role changes.We will attempt to present a summary of the fragmented and confusing information on gender and sexuality.

If you would like something in particular covered in this workshop or would like to help please contact the Bicenter.

Date: Saturday, February 9.
Time: 9:30 A.M. - 5:30 P.M.
Place: The Bi Center.

Hair Cutters Needed

The Bi-Center is looking for hair cutters who would be willing to donate one evening to the Center. The last hair cutting party was such a huge success, thanks to the amazing effort of May that we'd like to repeat the event. If you're a professional hair stylist and wouldn't mind donating your talents, call David at the Center at 922-2300.



Coming-Out Bi

The process of coming out can be an exhilarating, rewarding experience. It can also be painful, frightening, and confusing. A lot of what happens to you depends on the support systems you develop and the kind of clearing and grounding you get.

Marilyn King and David Lourea, who have been leading the Tuesday night drop-in rap group at the Bi-Center, have put together a powerful, dynamic consciousness-raising workshop for people who are beginning to discover their bisexuality. Coming-Out Bi is a workshop that examines the mythology about being bi; helps participants find creative ways of developing support systems; explores bisexuality from a social, emotional and sexual view. It will also be a time, place, and cause to celebrate.

TIME: Sunday, February 2 from 9:30 am to 6:00 pm

PLACE: Bi-Center, 1757 Hayes in San Francisco

COST: $20.00 for Bi-Center members
$25.00 for nonmembers

Preregistration is essential: to preregister send a check for $5.00 to David Lourea at the Bi-Center.

Wednesday Rap Group

Our drop-in rap group will be held on Wednesday nights, starting November 7. The emphasis of the group is on getting to know one another in a casual rap rather than getting into "heavies" which can be dealt with only in on-going groups. Although an exchange of ideas and information can be very helpful, the group does not provide therapy; however, the Bi Center can provide referrals to qualified therapists.

We will be asking for a $1.00 donation to help support the work of the Center.

If you are interested in meeting other people and knowing more about the Bi Center, why not drop in on a Wednesday night at 7:30 PM?

Community Bulletin Board

OFFICE HOURS

The Bi Center is open to the public on Tuesday nights, from 5:30 to 7:00 PM, and Thursday nights, from 7:00 to 10:00 PM. Give us a phone call, or stop by, look the place over, and get acquainted!

NEWSLETTER SCHEDULE

All contributions to the Bi-Monthly, including announcements, etc., must be in by the start of the Pasteup session. All articles longer than 50 words must be in by Layout day. All sessions are held at the Bi Center, and your help is badly needed!

LAYOUT: Sunday, February 17, 11 AM - 4PM
PASTEUP: Sunday, February 24, 11 AM - 4PM

Pot Luck

On Saturday, January 19th we'll have a pot luck party from 7:30 to midnight. Bring your favorite cullinary treat to share.

DONATION: $2.00 for members and $3.00 for non-members.

BICENTER DAY HIKES

Anyone out there want to go to Pt. Reyes and explore on the off tourist season? Becca Thomas will share her experience with the area and take everyone on a moderately paced hike through gorgeous scenery to Sculptured Beach and environs. Bicycles are welcome-the trails are in excellent shape for two wheel transport. Unfortunately dogs are not allowed on trails. Bring some lunch to share by the sea-there is no water on the trail so bring plenty to drink (one quart per person should be sufficient).

Meet at the Bi Center on Sunday, January 13, at 9:30 A.M. If it's raining that day, we'll try again on the next Sunday (January 20) --same place and time.

BI NIGHT AT SUTRO

Stephen Brown, manager of Sutro bath house on weekends and a member of the board of the Bicenter and SFSI, has offered us a special $ rate and the use of the couples room, which has a fireplace, massage space, etc. Let's go together and create our own positive energy-see how many people can fit into the hot tub? Massage strokes will be demonstrated and sensualityand a loving experience will be our focus.

Bring your rubber ducks and other bath toys to the Bicenter night at Sutro. We will make an attempt to keep the male-female ratio about even. We particularly welcome those who would like to learn to be less shy about nudity in a loving setting. Date: Saturday, January 19. Meet at the Bi Center at 9:00 P.M.

Games Night

For all of our games enthusiasts the next two games nights will be at 7:30 on Thursday, January 24th and Thursday, February 7th. Bring your friends, favorite games and some munchies to share.

DONATION: $1.00

Valentine's Day Party

This will be our fourth annual Valentine's Day party. Three years ago was our first big public coming out event, and we've claimed the day as our own ever since. This year the festivities begin at 9:00 pm on February 16th at the Bi-Center. Bring friends, fantasies, and munchies to share.

DONATION: $3.00 for members and $4.00 for non-members.

BI-MONTHLY CALENDAR 1980

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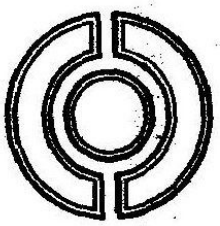

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